THE TIMES-PICAYUNE, NEW ORLEANS, LA., THURSDAY MORNING, AUGUST 28, 1969

Connick Tells of Bonds Case

Convict Located; $30,000 Total Uncollected

Gerald Dawson Norris, serving 10 years in a North Carolina prison since April 1, has left behind $30,000 in uncollected bond forfeitures in New Orleans but had no local detainer pending against him as of Aug. 19.

Norris' record of bond forfeitures was revealed Wednesday by attorney Harry Connick, a candidate for district attorney opposing incumbent Jim Garrison. Norris jumped bond four times here after having allegedly committed crimes ranging from narcotics to burglary.

Connick said all four bonds were written by Maryland National Insurance Co., which is now estimated to owe as much as $720,000 in forfeited bonds in Criminal District Court here, as well as $200,000 in Oklahoma. The company's bonds are now banned in Criminal District Court, and two Juvenile Court judges have refused to accept them.

GERALD DAWSON NORRIS

CHARGES LISTED

In each case Norris failed to appear for trial, the bond was ordered forfeited and the District Attorney's office made no attempt to collect, Connick said. He listed bond forfeitures and charges against Norris as follows:

1. Arrested June 7, 1967, charged with possession of narcotics, $10,000 forfeited bond.

2. Oct. 2, 1967, attempting to obtain a narcotic drug by fraud and deceit, $5,000 forfeited bond.

3. Oct. 16, 1967, simple burglary, $5,000 forfeited bond.

4. Dec. 8, 1967, arrested for aggravated burglary and possession of narcotics, charged only with possession of narcotics, $10,000 forfeited bond.

Connick asserted that records of the district attorney's office show Garrison made no attempt to locate Norris, even though Georgia and New York have detainers pending against him.

He said Garrison told him he will place a detainer on Norris now that the matter has been called to his attention.

Connick showed a reporter a letter bearing the signature of Ben L. Baker, supervisor of combined records, North Carolina Department of Correction, which said Norris is serving 10-year and two-year sentences concurrently. The letter was dated Aug. 19, 1969.

"Two detainers are pending against inmate Norris," the letter said. "A charge of armed robbery has been lodged under the name of Richard Marlow Drew from Sheriff J. A. Jones, Fayette County, Ga. Another armed robbery charge is outstanding against Norris from Eastchester, N.Y."

The letter said Norris began his sentences April 1, 1969, and they are scheduled to expire April 22, 1976, when he will face charges in Georgia and New York.

SENTENCED IN MARCH

"He was sentenced March 31, 1969, on charges of breaking, entering and larceny and possession of burglary tools," the letter said. "He received the 10 years for these crimes. The two years was imposed for assault by pointing a gun."

Connick said Norris had a long police record before the June 7, 1967, offense, including simple battery, being a fugitive from Jefferson Parish, receiving stolen property, violating parole from Angola, La., driving under the influence of intoxicants, negligent homicide, reckless driving, criminal conspiracy and armed robbery.

"The point is that this man has been able to commit at least five more crimes after his original (June 7, 1967) arrest here," Connick said.

"If he had been prosecuted on the original charge, or if a high enough bond had been set, he would have been in jail and unable to commit the other crimes."

HIGH BOND FAVORED

Connick said a much higher bond would have been justified and supported by a judge because Norris had been a fugitive from justice before.

Asked to comment on Connick's charges, James L. Alcock, first assistant district attorney, said: "We're conducting our own investigation into this matter and expect to have a full statement shortly."

Connick said he tracked down the fugitive independently after the district attorney's office said it could not locate him.

The letter Connick produced said Norris is jailed in Central Prison, Raleigh, N.C. Norris is from Seminary, Miss.

FOREST L-

Three-fourth-
land is